Bishop Ephraim of Seleukia: Rus' has been enriched by the legacy of world Orthodoxy and has enriched it



"I am happy to be in this beautiful country – Ukraine for the first time in my life on the commemoration day of the great event – the Baptism of Rus'," said Bishop Ephraim of Seleukia, secretary of the Synod of the Orthodox Church of Antioch in his homily delivered after the Divine Liturgy celebrated in the Cathedral Square at the Kiev Laura of the Caves on July 28, 2021.

Bishop Ephraim conveyed to His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and All Ukraine, his co-workers and his flock blessing and greetings of His Beatitude John X, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East

"The way of your nation to Orthodoxy had begun much earlier, during the time of Princess Olga, but we know that Rus' was converted to Christianity in 988 after Grand Prince Vladimir was baptized in Chersoneses in Crimea and upon returning to Kiev ordered his dependants, counselors and all men and women in the capital city to be baptized in the Dnieper river – the symbolic Kiev's Jordan," said Bishop Ephraim.

He underscored that Grand Prince Vladimir had done a lot of good to his people by baptism. “The new faith made a difference to the entire nation, having updated and united it, moved it away from heathen rites and illumined it with the all-merciful light of God. Therefore, we consider Prince Vladimir a great ruler and a saint equal-to-the-apostles as he is called in our Orthodox tradition.”

Bishop Ephraim continued to say: “Through Baptism the Ancient Rus’ with its centre in Kiev – a New Jerusalem has got access to the legacy of world Orthodoxy, has been enriched by it and has enriched it. We have come here today to celebrate the event of the Baptism of Rus’ and draw strength from the sublime treasure of Slavic Orthodoxy.”

Having wished many years to His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufry, the hierarch of the Orthodox Church of Antioch said: “Long live Christian Ukraine! Long live Orthodoxy!”

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